

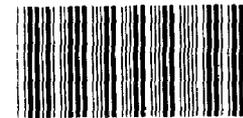
**GAO**

United States General Accounting Office / 33337  
Report to the Chairman, Committee on  
Armed Services, House of Representatives

May 1987

# MARINE CORPS MANPOWER

## Improvements Needed in Processes for Determining Manpower Requirements



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United States  
General Accounting Office  
Washington, D.C. 20548

National Security and  
International Affairs Division

B-225162

May 26, 1987\*

The Honorable Les Aspin  
Chairman, Committee on Armed Services  
United States House of Representatives

Dear Mr. Chairman:

On April 18, 1985, you asked us to determine the degree to which the services' manpower requirements are based on sound and rigorous processes. This report, which examines the Marine Corps' manpower program, is a partial response to that request.

In general, we found that the procedures the Marine Corps uses to determine manpower requirements lack adequate rigor and that there has been insufficient oversight of the manpower program. We are recommending that the Marine Corps improve its manpower program by (1) issuing additional guidance, (2) using accepted work measurement techniques and implementing additional management controls, (3) ensuring that adequate documentation is maintained, and (4) requiring systematic management oversight.

As arranged with your office, unless you publicly announce its contents earlier, we plan no further distribution of this report until 30 days from the date of the report. Then, we will send copies to the Chairmen, House Committee on Government Operations, Senate Committee on Governmental Affairs, House and Senate Committees on Appropriations, and Senate Committee on Armed Services; the Secretary of Defense; the Secretary of the Navy; and the Director, Office of Management and Budget. Copies will also be made available to other interested parties.

If you have any questions, please call Martin M Ferber on 275-8412.

Sincerely yours,

Frank C. Conahan  
Assistant Comptroller General

# Executive Summary

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## Purpose

In fiscal year 1987, Marine Corps personnel will cost over \$5.3 billion, about 58 percent of the Marine Corps' total budget. To ensure that this cost is justified, the Marine Corps needs to determine its manpower requirements in as systematic a manner as possible. At the request of the Chairman, House Committee on Armed Services, GAO evaluated the adequacy of the processes the Marine Corps uses to determine its non-combat manpower requirements.

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## Background

The Marine Corps has two components—one needed for combat, known as operating Fleet Marine Forces (FMF), and one needed for administration and support, known as non-Fleet Marine Forces (non-FMF). The FMF in turn, consists of three Marine Amphibious Forces, each composed of command element, ground combat forces, aviation combat forces, and combat service support forces. The non-FMF forces are located at various operational and training bases and stations, logistical/supply depots, recruit depots, and Marine Corps Headquarters.

The Marine Corps determines requirements for its forces by using

- staffing standards (statements of the number of personnel, by grade and skill, needed to accomplish a given amount of work, listed in the Personnel Requirements Criteria Manual);
- on-site surveys (the application of existing staffing standards and reviews of the way work is actually done and the number of people required to do it where standards do not exist);
- structure studies (studies of the optimum organization of a unit or force, a by-product of which is information on manpower requirements); and
- tactical doctrine and military judgment.

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## Results in Brief

The quantitative processes the Marine Corps uses to determine manpower requirements for non-FMF units and administrative and support components of FMF units have shortcomings, and the Marine Corps has not provided sufficient guidance and oversight.

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## Principal Findings

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### Staffing Standards

The basis of many of the Marine Corps staffing standards is unclear, and their coverage could be expanded. Of the standards GAO reviewed,

almost a third showed no indication that they were based on measured work load, and none were based on methods improvement studies. Instead, they were based on the judgment of Marine Corps officials or on formulas of undeterminable origin.

**On-Site Surveys**

GAO observed that during one on-site survey analysts usually did not apply the staffing standards that existed for the positions but based their judgment of the number of positions needed mainly on interviews with work center personnel. They did not supplement these interviews with other audit techniques.

The Marine Corps does not make on-site surveys to establish requirements for personnel and supply administration elements within ground combat and combat service support units, even though these elements provide support services similar to those non-FMF units provide, for which it does make surveys.

**Inadequate Documentation**

Little documentation exists for the development and maintenance of the staffing standards contained in the Personnel Requirements Criteria Manual. The documentation of on-site surveys is also inadequate. The Marine Corps does not document how the results of the structure studies are used.

**Inadequate Oversight**

The problems with the processes the Marine Corps uses to determine manpower requirements seem to be largely due to inadequate oversight. The Marine Corps has no specific guidance on when or how the various determination processes should be used and documented. Nor does it sufficiently coordinate or monitor the processes the various organizations use to determine their manpower needs.

**Recommendations**

GAO makes a number of recommendations, including that the Commandant of the Marine Corps

- issue guidance governing the development and application of manpower determination processes and require systematic management oversight;
- improve the staffing standards program by using accepted work measurement techniques and efficiency review results;

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- improve the on-site survey program by ensuring that analysts apply existing staffing standards and that on-site surveys are used to help establish requirements for appropriate elements of FMF units; and
  - ensure that the application of staffing standards, on-site surveys, and structure studies are adequately documented.

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## Agency Comments and GAO Evaluation

DOD agreed that the Marine Corps' manpower determination processes have shortcomings and said that the Marine Corps plans to address them by

- revising its Personnel Requirements Criteria Manual, which will contain staffing standards determined through more rigorous procedures and cover additional functional areas;
- developing a new on-site survey program;
- developing non-FMF unit staffing standards; and
- examining appropriate functions within FMF units in garrison situations for possible application of staffing standards and on-site surveys.

DOD also agreed that improvements were needed in documentation, guidance, and oversight.

However, DOD expressed concern that the overall tone of GAO's report created the false impression that Marine Corps manpower determinations were arbitrary and uncoordinated. GAO agrees that the Marine Corps manpower program should not be characterized as arbitrary and uncoordinated, but the problems GAO found in the areas of program guidance, work measurement methods, and documentation reduces the Marine Corps' capacity to ensure that its manpower needs are reasonably accurate.



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## Abbreviations

DOD	Department of Defense
FMF	Fleet Marine Forces
SQMD	Squadron Manpower Document



# Introduction

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The size and composition of our military forces is an important issue to the President and the Congress as they seek ways to both maintain our national defense and control costs. Having too few or the wrong kinds of people degrades wartime readiness, while having too many people unnecessarily increases manpower costs. To ensure that they have the proper number and quality of personnel, the services need effective manpower requirements determination systems.

Accurate determinations of the size and makeup of its manpower requirements are of particular concern to the Marine Corps. First, personnel costs are a significant portion of the Marine Corps budget. In fiscal year 1987, costs for active-duty military personnel paid out of Marine Corps appropriations are expected to exceed \$5.3 billion, which is 58 percent of the total budget. Second, since 1980, the Marine Corps has introduced a considerable amount of new equipment—such as light armored vehicles—requiring reconfiguration of its forces. Third, the Marine Corps has recently changed its concepts for command and control for Marine Air Ground Task Forces, requiring new force structures.

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## Marine Corps Structure and Manning

The National Security Act of 1947, as amended, specifies that the Marine Corps will have a minimum of three combat divisions and air wings, with supporting units. However, the act leaves the determination of the structure and manning of these units, as well as of their supporting units, to the Commandant of the Marine Corps.

The force that would be needed immediately for war is called the Programmed Structure Force. However, during peacetime the Congress authorizes a smaller force to be manned in a given fiscal year, called Programmed Manning. Marine Corps readiness is measured by comparing Programmed Manning—referred to as “authorizations”—with the Programmed Structure Force—referred to as “requirements.” (See app. I for a summary of the Marine Corps’ Programmed Structure Force and Programmed Manning, by function, for fiscal year 1987.)

The Marine Corps has two components—one needed for combat, known as operating Fleet Marine Forces (FMF), and one needed for administration and support, known as non-Fleet Marine Forces (non-FMF).

The FMF consists of three Marine Amphibious Forces, each composed of a command element, a Marine Division (ground combat forces), a Marine Aircraft Wing (aviation combat forces), and a Force Service Support Group (combat service support forces). Elements of the ground combat

forces can also be integrated with aviation and service support forces to form alternative combat organizations, known as Marine Air-Ground Task Forces, for particular missions and combat environments.

The ground combat forces represent 27 percent (59,784 positions) of the Marine Corps' total fiscal year 1987 requirements for military personnel. These forces are made up of infantry, artillery, light armored vehicle, tank, assault amphibious vehicle, reconnaissance, combat engineer, and command and control units, which are organized into battalions, regiments, headquarters, and separate companies.

Aviation combat forces represent 23 percent (49,541 positions) of the Marine Corps' fiscal year 1987 requirements for military personnel. These forces consist of fighter/attack, electronic warfare, reconnaissance, and refueling aircraft squadrons; helicopter squadrons; and various other support groups and squadrons.

Combat service support forces, which provide direct support for combat forces, represent 13 percent (28,809 positions) of the Marine Corps' fiscal year 1987 military personnel requirements. These forces are organized into headquarters and service; maintenance; supply; engineering support; motor transport; and medical, dental, and landing support battalions.

The non-FMF is comprised of the personnel (both military and civilian) needed for administration and support, who are positioned at various operational and training bases and stations, logistical/supply depots, recruit depots, and Marine Corps Headquarters.

## Marine Corps Manpower Requirements Determination Processes

Marine Corps manpower requirements are recorded in tables of organization, which also describe the mission, organization, and structure of all Marine Corps units. These tables identify the specific positions needed and the grade and skill requirements for each position. The tables provide the basic framework against which authorizations are allocated. Generally, the tables are developed and updated by Marine Corps Headquarters agencies designated as force structure sponsors, with the assistance of technical advisers from functional areas such as personnel and administration, supply administration, and data communication. The force structure sponsors may recommend changes to the tables as a result of the annual budget process, field command initiatives, the acquisition process, or special studies.

In fiscal year 1983, the Commandant of the Marine Corps froze the Marine Corps' force structure at the fiscal year 1984 requirement level. Therefore, modifications to the tables that involve increases in the number of positions, grade levels, and skills require compensatory reductions elsewhere in the Marine Corps or—when such reductions are considered impossible—the Commandant must approve an exception allowing an increase without a corresponding decrease.

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## Objectives, Scope, and Methodology

This review is part of a series examining manpower determination processes across the Department of Defense. We are making these reviews at the request of the Chairman, House Committee on Armed Services. In partial response to that request, we assessed the adequacy of

- the processes the Marine Corps uses to establish manpower requirements for non-FMF units and administrative and support components of FMF units;
- the documentation the Marine Corps uses to support its staffing criteria and manpower requirements; and
- Marine Corps guidance for and oversight of its manpower requirements determination processes.

We conducted our work primarily at Headquarters, United States Marine Corps, Washington, D.C., and Marine Corps Base, Camp Pendleton, California. We also performed work at Marine Corps Air Station, El Toro, California; the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Force Management and Personnel, Washington D.C.; and the Center for Naval Analyses, Alexandria, Virginia.

At these locations, we interviewed key officials responsible for establishing (1) Marine Corps manpower policies and procedures and (2) the various manpower-related data bases used to determine staffing standards and manpower requirements. We also reviewed the Marine Corps' policies and regulations applicable to manpower requirements determination and available documentation.

We accompanied a team of analysts while they conducted an on-site validation for approximately 4,300 non-FMF positions at Camp Pendleton. During this evaluation, we (1) observed analysts conducting manpower surveys at 19 of 128 organizational units surveyed, which accounted for 46 percent of the 4,300 positions; (2) interviewed analysts about their validation of the manpower requirements for those units where we did

not accompany them; and (3) reviewed documentation generated from these surveys.

Further, we reviewed structure studies that were used, in part, to develop and support manpower requirements and conducted by the Marine Corps Development and Education Command, the Center for Naval Analyses, and private contractors.

We did our work from June 1985 to January 1987 in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards.

# Marine Corps Manpower Determination Processes Lack Adequate Rigor and Oversight

The accuracy of manpower requirements depends on the rigor with which they are established, validated or updated, and documented. The term “rigor” connotes carefulness, diligence, and thoroughness in data collection and analysis, though it does not mean that data must be 100 percent accurate. DOD policy (DOD Instruction 5010.37) states that requirements should be determined by the use of professionally recognized techniques of work measurement. Acceptable rigor in requirements determinations means that

- staffing standards—statements of the number of personnel, by grade and skill, needed to accomplish a given amount of work—should cover as many positions as possible;
- these standards should be determined through (1) engineered work measurement techniques—such as time study and work sampling—or through a combination of operational audit techniques—such as direct observation of work being performed, review of regulations and manuals, review of records to determine how work was accomplished in the past, and interviews with work center personnel; and (2) methods improvement studies, which determine the most efficient way of accomplishing a task;
- a combination of operational audit techniques should be used to determine the number of positions needed where staffing standards do not apply; and
- the procedures used to determine requirements should be documented.

According to Marine Corps officials, several methods have been used to establish manpower requirements. Requirements for direct combat operations are determined primarily through tactical doctrine and military judgment, processes which we did not examine. Staffing standards and on-site surveys are the principal methods used. In addition, although it is not their primary purpose, force structure studies are also used to identify manpower needs. We found a number of problems with the Marine Corps’ application of staffing standards, on-site surveys, and structure studies and believe that these problems were largely due to the Marine Corps’ providing inadequate guidance and oversight.

## Staffing Standards

To determine requirements for most non-FMF units and some components of FMF units, the Marine Corps uses the staffing standards in the Personnel Requirements Criteria Manual, maintained by the Deputy Chief of Staff for Manpower (Marine Corps). This manual is supposed to be updated every 3 years by Marine Corps technical advisors for the functional areas covered by the manual. It is organized into 35 chapters,

each chapter covering a functional area such as armament repair, aviation operations, personnel administration, and motor transportation operations and maintenance.

We judgmentally selected 10 chapters of the manual for review. We found that the basis of many of the standards was unclear and there was no indication that the standards were based on measured work load, although they covered some areas where work load was measurable, and none were based on documented methods improvement studies. Further, we found that the coverage of the standards could be expanded.

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**Basis for Staffing Standards  
Unclear**

Through discussions with cognizant Marine Corps officials, we determined how the standards were developed in the 10 chapters we reviewed:

- Seven (used to determine the number of personnel needed for correctional facilities, food service, disbursing, FMF motor transport and maintenance, supply, personnel administration, and military police) were developed or updated primarily on the basis of the judgment of Marine Corps officials.
- One (used to determine the number of school instructors required) was reportedly based on the results of an interservice study. Marine Corps officials did not know whether the formulas contained in the standards were based on work load data or on judgment.
- One (used to determine the number of enlisted postal clerks required) was based, according to Marine Corps officials, on a formula developed by DOD's Military Postal Service Agency. These officials did not know how the formula was derived or how the grade requirements for enlisted clerks were established.
- One (used to determine the number of personnel required to operate and maintain non-FMF motor transportation equipment) was based on undeterminable methodology. None of the officials we interviewed knew how this chapter was derived.

We found no indication that the Marine Corps made methods improvement studies before developing staffing criteria for the 10 chapters we reviewed. Not performing methods improvement studies will perpetuate any existing inefficiencies in the way functions are performed.

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Current Status of Standards  
Development

The Marine Corps is revising the Personnel Requirements Criteria Manual to develop more rigorous and supportable standards. Marine Corps officials say that the new standards will be determined by appropriate work measurement techniques and methods improvement studies.

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Coverage of Staffing  
Standards Could Be  
Expanded

Another problem with the staffing standards is that their coverage may be too limited. For example, we found that no staffing standards existed for over one third of approximately 4,300 non-FMF positions at Camp Pendleton. Many of the positions not covered by standards were in areas where work load is measurable and the development of staffing standards feasible, such as administration and support.

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On-Site Surveys

To validate requirements for its aviation and some non-FMF units, Marine Corps officials stated that they used on-site surveys. Such surveys involved application of existing staffing standards and reviews of the way work is actually done and the number of people required to do it when no standards existed. We found a number of problems with the way the surveys for non-FMF units were being conducted. We also found that on-site surveys were not being conducted for areas within the ground combat and combat service support forces where this methodology could have been used to validate the continued use of the applicable standards and to evaluate work load accuracy.

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Surveys of Aviation Units

We were unable to evaluate the adequacy of on-site reviews of aviation units because (1) none were performed during our review and (2) no documentation existed to show how past reviews had been done.

The Deputy Chief of Staff for Aviation, as the structural sponsor, is responsible for establishing aviation manpower requirements. This organization has one principal manpower analyst who is responsible for validating manpower requirements for the various Marine Corps aviation commands. This analyst stated that manpower requirements for squadrons operating older aircraft (pre-F/A-18 aircraft, which make up the majority of aircraft in the Marine Corps inventory) were developed at the time of their initial deployment by functional experts from the fleet, using contractor-supplied data and their own expertise. The Marine Corps then updated these manpower requirements through its review of personnel-change requests received from field units. The analyst stated that she has performed periodic on-site manpower surveys using operational audit and work measurement techniques for those

squadrons operating the older aircraft to validate and update their manpower requirements.

Appendix II describes the way manpower requirements for squadrons with F/A-18 and newer aircraft will be determined.

## Surveys of Non-FMF Units

The Marine Corps has an on-site manpower survey program, conducted by manpower analysts from the Deputy Chief of Staff for Manpower at Marine Corps Headquarters, which serves as the primary process for validating manpower requirements for non-FMF units. The objective of this program is to determine the minimum number of personnel required to accomplish assigned tasks by surveying all major Marine Corps supporting activities and organizations once every 3 years to evaluate and report on each position assigned to each unit.

To evaluate the conduct of on-site surveys of non-FMF units, we observed the survey of approximately 4,300 positions at Camp Pendleton. This survey was conducted by a team of five civilians and three officers representing major functional areas. We found that, although 62 percent of these positions were covered by staffing standards, the analysts used their own judgment for 84 percent of the applicable cases rather than applying the standards. The analysts stated that the standards were considered, although they based their decisions primarily on other factors. We found no indication that the use of judgment instead of the applicable standards was due to concerns about the validity or supportability of the standards.

We observed that the analysts based their judgments mainly on unrecorded discussions with managers, work center supervisors, and workers about the mission and organization of the unit, past and future work load, and the perceived need for various positions. The analysts did little to supplement the information gathered from these interviews by using other operational audit techniques, such as observing work being done or analyzing work center files or records. Although the analysts who conducted this survey said that they had observed work being performed, we witnessed that such observations consisted only of a quick tour of the work center. The analysts also said that they had reviewed and analyzed available records for a number of the surveyed units. We were unable to verify their statements because they could provide little documentation supporting the extent of their analysis. For those units where we accompanied the analysts, we observed that in most instances, the analyst either did not review records or generally

performed only cursory reviews, which consisted of thumbing through available logs or reports but making no analysis of the data. In those instances where the analysts reviewed data, the review was usually done to identify work load factors required to apply available staffing criteria.

The absence or limited use of other sources of data (such as first-hand observation or analysis of records) to verify and validate information derived from interviews is an inadequate use of operational audit methodology. Operational audit depends on a convergence of information to lend credibility to its results.

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#### No Surveys of Some Areas

The Marine Corps does not make on-site surveys to validate manpower requirements for those areas within ground combat and combat service support units where such surveys seem appropriate. More specifically, it does not use surveys for (1) the headquarters and service companies (which provide such support services as personnel and supply administration) within each of the ground combat and combat service support battalions or for (2) such areas within the combat service support group as supply maintenance and motor transport. These elements provide support services similar to those provided by non-FMF units, for which the Marine Corps does make on-site surveys.

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#### On-Site Surveys Redirected

The Marine Corps recently decided to redirect on-site surveys and to use the personnel involved in those surveys to determine new non-FMF staffing standards and overhaul the Personnel Requirements Criteria Manual. While we agree with the current emphasis on standards development, a periodic on-site validation survey program for both FMF and non-FMF units should eventually be used to ensure that standards continue to be valid and are being applied correctly, and that manpower needs not subject to standards are being determined in a reasonable way.

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#### Structure Studies

Structure studies are used primarily to determine the optimum size of a unit or force. They are also used, in part, to address manpower requirements. We found that the usefulness of structure studies for manpower requirements determination was limited because they utilized pre-imposed fiscal and personnel management constraints and encompassed only parts of units.

Because the studies are used primarily to determine force structure, they generally start with an assumption about the feasible size of the unit that will be funded and then build a structure to fit. For example, in 1979, the Commandant reduced the size of an infantry battalion from 1,192 to 889 and, due to fiscal constraints, directed that a study be conducted to develop an optimum infantry battalion having about 900 marines. Although the study found a need for 990 marines, it proposed a 916-man structure in accordance with the Commandant's direction. In 1981, the Commandant directed that the infantry battalion be further reduced to 789 marines in order to release positions needed to staff the new Light Armored Vehicle battalions. This reduction was accomplished by reducing the size of rifle squads. Later, the battalion size was increased to 824 marines. Starting in fiscal year 1986, the Commandant authorized the infantry battalion to be increased to 867 marines because various field commands complained that the 824-marine structure would not allow them to fulfill their combat missions.

We do not mean to imply that fiscal and personnel management realities should not play a role in determining force structure. We recognize the Marine Corps' need to develop force structure arrangements that most effectively use the number of personnel expected to be authorized and available. However, the Marine Corps also needs to identify a force structure designed to meet its assigned missions independent of fiscal and personnel management constraints, so that DOD and congressional decisionmakers can make more informed decisions about the Marine Corps' strength levels. We do not see a problem with the use of structure studies to determine how to structure or use the personnel the Marine Corps expects to have. However, because of the pre-imposed constraints, structure studies alone are not an adequate method of requirements determination.

The usefulness of structure studies for manpower requirements determination was also limited because the studies encompassed only parts of the total force. For example, according to Marine Corps officials, structure studies are being done or have been done since 1980 for only four of the eight different types of ground combat battalions. Marine Corps field commands have stated that a more integrated approach is needed to study manpower needs of the total force, rather than just of individual units. One reason for comprehensively validating manpower requirements is that the individual units within a division depend on each other to accomplish their mission, and the manpower needs of one unit cannot be reasonably validated apart from the needs of the other units.

We also found that structure studies, like the other processes we reviewed, were not always based on sound work measurement techniques or used inadequately supported assumptions.

## Lack of Adequate Documentation

A lack of adequate documentation contributed to our concern about the methods the Marine Corps uses to determine requirements. Adequate documentation is necessary to give credibility to statements of requirements so that established requirements can be reviewed and estimates of future requirements defended. Inadequate documentation can camouflage not only weaknesses in original determinations but also variations of staffing needs caused by changes in methods of operations or workspace arrangements. Without adequate documentation, outdated requirements are likely to be perpetuated. We found, however, that the Marine Corps' staffing standards, on-site surveys, and structure studies all lacked adequate documentation.

First, the Marine Corps has little documentation supporting the development and maintenance of the staffing standards contained in the Personnel Requirements Criteria Manual. For the 10 chapters of the manual we reviewed, we found virtually no documentation available on the rationale for the development, validation, and updating of the staffing standards.

Second, the major sponsor for aviation does not document the manpower determination processes used during on-site surveys, other than what may be documented in the Navy training plans supporting preliminary tables of organization. Consequently, aviation manpower requirements are based on undocumented methodologies.

During our review of the on-site surveys of non-FMF units at Camp Pendleton, we observed that analysts usually did not adequately support their reasons for changing requirements by describing the methodology they used to gather and analyze data, nor did they document the work load factors or the specific staffing criteria they used. The following are typical examples of notations the analysts made:

1. "Workload justifies this additional Safety Inspector."
2. "Current workload supports increase."
3. "To reflect actual organizational structure."
4. "To provide grade commensurate with responsibilities."
5. "The expertise of Maj[or] 0170, is required in this billet."

6. "Billet is a valid requirement within the Joint Legal Assistance Office."

In each of these cases, the analysts simply stated their conclusions and did not specify the basis for them. In some cases, on the other hand, analysts provided a more complete justification. For example:

- "Three engine companies are authorized 2 brush fire trucks by CMC equating to 6 personnel. Six personnel times the manning factor of 2.72 personnel equates to 17 personnel on a 24 hour basis. See Table 9-1 (footnote 3) of MCOP320.5 [the Marine Corps Personnel Criteria Manual]."
- "The proposed position has been identified to assist the Manpower Manager in implementing the requirements of the Base Position Management Program. This responsibility will include position management reviews, organizational studies and coordination with various staff members regarding manpower utilization."

These more informative justifications provide a much better basis for future reviews and reevaluations of the need for various positions.

Finally, while the structure studies themselves are documented, the Marine Corps does not document how the results of the studies are used to establish manpower requirements.

## Marine Corps Provides Little Oversight of Manpower Requirements Determination Processes

The problems with the manpower requirements determination processes discussed above seem to be largely due to inadequate oversight provided by the Marine Corps. The proper management of a comprehensive manpower requirements planning and determination function requires the designation of responsibilities for

- issuing formal guidance that establishes common objectives and requires technical rigor in developing staffing standards and in determining reliable minimum manpower requirements;
- coordinating all manpower requirements determination processes to ensure consistency in achieving stated manpower management objectives;
- monitoring, by an independent authority, all manpower requirements determination processes to ensure compliance with applicable policies and procedures, and to provide performance feedback to manpower management authorities so that timely and systematic improvement of the processes is possible; and

- emphasizing that management is committed to determining manpower requirements in the most efficient, effective, and reliable manner possible by dedicating adequate resources to the manpower requirements determination processes, including the oversight process.
- 

### Lack of Guidance

The Marine Corps has no guidance on

- how staffing criteria should be developed and updated or validated,
- when and how on-site surveys and structure studies should be undertaken,
- how methods studies should be undertaken and used,
- when and how the judgment of personnel should be used, or
- how determination processes should be documented.

Compounding the problem of a lack of methodological guidance is the lack of guidance on the number of hours marines have available and are required to work in order to help determine how many personnel the Marine Corps needs for those functions where staffing standards are used.

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### Inadequate Program Management

We found little evidence that the various Marine Corps units, each of which develops its own procedures for determining manpower requirements, coordinate the procedures they use. We also saw no evidence that the Marine Corps unit responsible for the Personnel Requirements Criteria Manual coordinated the procedures used by the over 20 different functional sponsors involved in the development and validation of the staffing standards contained in the manual.

Furthermore, although the Marine Corps established an efficiency review program in 1983 in response to a DOD directive, it has not integrated this program into its manpower requirements determination process. The purpose of these reviews is to ensure that functions are performed in the most efficient and most effective manner. Marine Corps officials agree that these efficiency reviews should also be used to help establish staffing standards, and at the time we finished our field work, the Marine Corps was studying the possibility of integrating the efficiency review program into the development of staffing standards and the establishment of manpower requirements.

The Marine Corps also needs to monitor the processes its various organizations are using to determine manpower requirements to ensure that

- processes for deriving requirements are reasonable and in compliance with applicable policies and procedures,
- manpower needs are established through as objective and rigorous a process as practical, and
- the basis of each requirement is adequately explained and documented.

Although the Marine Corps' on-site survey program provides some independent evaluation of the processes non-FMF units use to derive their manpower requirements, it does not monitor or independently verify the processes FMF units use to derive their manpower requirements, even though these units account for 63 percent of the Marine Corps' stated manpower needs.

## Conclusions

We believe that the methods the Marine Corps is using to develop, validate or update, and document manpower requirements lack adequate rigor because

- the staffing standards are not based on a rigorous analysis of work load or on the use of methods improvement studies and are limited in their coverage;
- on-site surveys mainly involve interviews with work center personnel—rather than the use of a variety of operational audit techniques—and are not done for certain areas in the ground combat and combat service support units where they seem appropriate;
- the structure studies are not always based on measured work load, are sometimes based on questionable assumptions and data, are made only for individual units, and are often influenced by fiscal and manpower constraints; and
- the procedures used to determine requirements are undocumented.

We believe these problems to be largely due to inadequate guidance and oversight. Improved Marine Corps oversight of the procedures used to derive manpower requirements and their documentation would provide greater confidence in the accuracy of these requirements and would enable the Marine Corps to improve its justification of these requirements.

## Recommendations

We recommend that the Commandant of the Marine Corps

- issue guidance governing the development and application of manpower determination processes, including

- when engineered manpower standards, rather than less precise criteria such as staffing guides, should be used,
- when and how staffing standards should be developed, validated or updated, and documented,
- how structure studies should be used in determining manpower needs, and
- when and how judgment should be used in the manpower determination process and how it should be documented;
- require systematic management oversight that will provide adequate coordination and monitoring of the procedures the various organizations use to determine their manpower needs;
- require that the staffing standards program
  - use accepted work measurement techniques in standards development and validation,
  - use efficiency review results in the development of staffing standards, and
  - expand coverage of staffing standards to include all FMF and non-FMF functions where work load measurement is feasible and practical;
- require that the on-site survey program
  - use applicable standards and explain deviations from the standards,
  - use a combination of techniques where the operational audit approach is applied, and
  - use on-site surveys to help establish requirements for appropriate elements of FMF units;
- ensure that adequate documentation is maintained on the development and application of staffing standards, the conduct of on-site surveys, and the use of manpower requirements information from structure studies; and
- identify manpower requirements independent of fiscal and personnel management constraints.

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## Agency Comments and Our Evaluation

DOD generally concurred in our finding that the Marine Corps' manpower determination procedures have shortcomings and stated that the Marine Corps is taking corrective action by

- negotiating with the Office of Personnel Management to obtain assistance in developing a more rigorous manpower requirements determination methodology for non-FMF units;
- revising the Personnel Requirements Criteria Manual to include staffing standards determined using accepted industrial engineering techniques, including methods improvement/work simplification analysis, and

expanding coverage to functional areas not previously included in the manual;

- establishing a system for aviation units to ensure the accuracy of maintenance work load data, including the implementation of a 3-year audit cycle and improved documentation retention procedures; and
- developing an improved on-site survey program that will identify the most efficient organization, incorporate efficiency reviews, and determine work measurement standards.

DOD generally agreed that stricter adherence to established procedures and increased emphasis on documentation will improve the validation of manpower requirements. DOD said that the use of staffing standards for functional areas like administration, supply, and maintenance could be appropriate for FMF units, but only in garrison, noncombat situations. DOD stated that manpower requirements for FMF components determined through the use of staffing standards and on-site surveys could be applicable until the specific FMF unit deploys. Once a unit is deployed, its manpower needs become a function of the parameters of the specific operation and environment. DOD stated that the manpower needs of deployed units are therefore more appropriately determined through the conduct of combat exercises and mission and functional area analyses. DOD stated that priority will be placed on developing more rigorous procedures for non-FMF but that application to appropriate parts of FMF units will also be examined.

DOD agreed that the determination of manpower requirements should not be constrained by anticipated fiscal limitations. DOD also agreed that interdependent units require concurrent, comprehensive validation of their manpower needs. DOD was concerned, however, that our report implied that structure studies could be made without making some initial assumptions, and noted that assumptions need to be made concerning variations in maneuver units and combat support. DOD also stated that structure studies alone cannot be used to determine manpower requirements for FMF units but that the insight and experience of Marine commanders gained from combat and exercises must also be considered. We agree with the Marine Corps' comments and our finding was intended only to raise questions about the use of structure studies in determining manpower requirements.

DOD agreed that the Marine Corps manpower program was hampered by inadequate documentation and noted that the new program will provide full documentation. DOD also agreed that oversight has been insufficient

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**Chapter 2**  
**Marine Corps Manpower Determination**  
**Processes Lack Adequate Rigor and Oversight**

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and stated that the new manpower requirements determination procedures will require direct involvement and coordination with functional sponsors and will include establishment of the most efficient organization and efficiency review procedures.



# Fiscal Year 1987 Marine Corps' Programmed Structure and Programmed Manning

Function	Number of positions		Percent manned
	Structure	Manning	
<b>FMF</b>			
Ground combat element	59,784	53,155	89
Air combat element	49,541	44,504	90
Combat Service Support	28,809	24,961	87
<b>Total FMF</b>	<b>138,134</b>	<b>122,620</b>	<b>89</b>
<b>Non-FMF</b>			
Military	48,749	47,706	98
Civilian	22,116	21,849	99
<b>Total Non-FMF</b>	<b>70,865</b>	<b>69,555</b>	<b>98</b>
<b>Total operational force</b>			
Military	186,883	170,326	91
Civilian	22,116	21,849	99
<b>Individual positions</b> (for training, transients, patients, and prisoners)			
Military	32,405	29,944	92
<b>Total requirement</b>			
Military	219,288	200,270	91
Civilian	22,116	21,849	99
<b>Total Marine Corps</b>	<b>241,404</b>	<b>222,119</b>	<b>92</b>

# Manpower Requirements for Squadrons With F/A-18 and Newer Aircraft

According to the principal aviation manpower analyst, manpower requirements for squadrons with F/A-18 and newer aircraft will be determined in three distinct but overlapping phases: First, the Navy, assisted by the Marine Corps, will develop a preliminary aircraft squadron table of organization for each newly acquired aircraft, using (1) Navy-developed flight-crew manning requirements and (2) manning requirements contained in the Navy training plans for the aircraft. These requirements will be used for the first 6 months of operation for the squadron.

Second, the aviation manpower analyst plans to conduct three different in-depth reviews of the squadron's manpower requirements (after 6, 18, and 30 months of squadron operation) using the methodology of the Navy's Squadron Manpower Document Program (SQMD).<sup>1</sup> These reviews will be conducted to develop a table of organization identifying manpower requirements that will be used in the long term to staff the squadron. According to the aviation manpower analyst, she has performed only one of the three planned SQMD audits for those squadrons using the new F/A-18 aircraft.

Third, after the table of organization has been established, periodic on-site surveys of the squadrons will be done using operational audit and work load measurement techniques to validate manpower requirements.

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<sup>1</sup>This program is the subject of another GAO report, Navy Manpower: Squadron Manpower Program Needs Improvement (GAO/NSIAD-87-101, May 1987).

# Agency Comments



ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20301-4000

FORCE MANAGEMENT  
AND PERSONNEL

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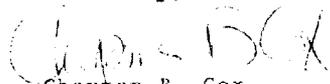
Mr. Frank C. Conahan  
Director, National Security and  
International Affairs Division  
U.S. General Accounting Office  
Washington, D.C. 20548

Dear Mr. Conahan:

This is the Department of Defense (DoD) response to the General Accounting Office Draft Report, "Marine Corps Manpower: Requirements Determination Process Lacks Adequate Rigor and Oversight," dated December 17, 1986 (GAO Code 391018, OSD Case 7184).

The GAO has provided the Marine Corps with useful insight and recommendations, most of which they are already implementing into their manpower requirements system. However, the overall tone of the report creates the false impression that Marine Corps manpower requirements determination is arbitrary and uncoordinated. This is not the case. Their requirements process is designed to define comprehensively a manpower structure that best accomplishes Marine Corps missions. The Marine Corps has always recognized manpower as its most valuable resource.

Sincerely,

  
Chapman B. Cox

Enclosure:  
DoD Comments on GAO Draft Report (OSD Case 7184)

GAO DRAFT REPORT - DATED 17 DECEMBER 1986

(GAO CODE 391018) OSD CASE 7184

"MARINE CORPS MANPOWER: REQUIREMENTS DETERMINATION PROCESSES

LACK ADEQUATE RIGOR AND OVERSIGHT"

DOD RESPONSE TO THE GAO DRAFT REPORT

FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

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FINDINGS

FINDING A: Marine Corps Manpower Determination Processes Lack Adequate Rigor And Oversight. The GAO observed that in FY 1987, Marine Corps personnel will cost over \$5.3 billion, about 58 percent of the Marine Corps' total budget. The GAO further observed that to ensure all this cost is justified, the Marine Corps must determine its manpower needs as rigorously as possible. The GAO noted that DoD productivity experts define acceptable rigor in requirements determinations as those staffing standards that cover as many positions as possible in terms of the number of personnel needed to accomplish a given amount of work. The GAO also noted these DoD productivity experts maintain that these standards should be determined through engineered work measurement techniques and/or methods improvement studies. According to the GAO, the term "rigor" connotes carefulness, diligence, and thoroughness in data collection and analysis, though it does not mean that data must be 100 percent accurate. The GAO reported that a combination of operational audit techniques should be used to determine the number of positions needed where staffing standards do not apply and the procedures used to determine requirements should be documented. The GAO found that several methods used by the Marine Corps to establish manpower requirements, including staffing standards, on-site surveys and force structure studies, have weaknesses. The GAO concluded that the application of these methods lacks acceptable rigor largely due to inadequate guidance and oversight by the Corps. (p. 3, pp. 14-15, p. 30/GAO Draft Report)

COMMENT: Concur. The DOD is aware of shortfalls in the procedures and is taking corrective action. The Marine Corps has initiated negotiations with the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) for assistance in obtaining contractor support to develop a non-FMF

Now on pp. 2 to 3, 12, and 21.

manpower requirements determination methodology that satisfies the following:

- (a) Credibility
- (b) Objectivity
- (c) Rigor
- (d) Accuracy
- (e) Timeliness
- (f) Management oversight
- (g) Audit trail

FINDING B: Staffing Standards: Unclear and Limited. The GAO reported that the Corps used the staffing standards, as contained in the Personnel Requirements Criteria Manual, maintained by the Deputy Chief of Staff for Manpower (Corps). The GAO noted that the manual is updated every 3 years. The GAO reviewed 10 of the 36 chapters of the manual and found that the basis of many of the standards was unclear because there was no indication that they were based on measured work load and none of the standards were based on methods improvement studies. The GAO found that of these 10 chapters, seven were developed or updated solely on the basis of the judgment of Corps officials, one was reportedly based on the results of an interservice study, one was based (according to Corps officials) on a formula developed by the DoD Military Postal Service Agency and one was based on undeterminable methodology. In addition, the GAO found no indication that any of the 10 chapters utilized methods improvement studies before developing staffing criteria. The GAO concluded that the lack of methods improvement studies will perpetuate any existing inefficiencies in the way functions are performed. (The GAO observed that as a result of its pointing out the above problems, the Corps is now revising the Personnel Requirements Criteria Manual and, according to Corps officials, the new standards will be determined by appropriate work measurement techniques and methods improvement studies.) (p. 3, pp. 15-16/GAO Draft Report)

COMMENT: Concur. As stated in the finding, the Personnel Requirements Criteria Manual is being totally revised. The revision will contain staffing standards which have been determined through organizational analysis, methods of improvement/work simplification analysis, workload identification/verification, organizational structure analysis, and military versus civilian incumbency.

FINDING C: Coverage of Staffing Standards May Be Too Limited. The GAO found that another problem with the staffing standards was the coverage may be too limited. The GAO noted, for example, that no staffing standards existed for over one-third of the approximately 4,300 non-Fleet Marine Forces (FMF) positions at Camp Pendleton, where many of the positions not covered by standards were in areas where work load is measurable and the development of staffing standards is feasible. The GAO concluded

Now on pp. 2 to 3,  
and 12 to 14.

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low on pp. 2 and 14.

that the coverage of the staffing standards appeared to be too limited. (p. 3, pp. 15-17, p. 30/GAO Draft Report)

**COMMENT:** Concur. As stated in the comment to FINDING B, the Personnel Requirements Criteria Manual is being totally revised. In addition to clarifying and updating current chapters of the Manual, new chapters covering functional areas not currently included, will be developed, promulgated, and enforced.

**FINDING D: On-site Surveys: Aviation Units.** The GAO reported that, according to Corps officials, it uses on-site surveys to validate requirements of aviation units. The GAO noted it was advised that manpower requirements for squadrons operating older aircraft (i.e., pre-F/A-18 aircraft, which make up the majority of aircraft in the Marine Corps inventory) were (1) developed at the time of their initial deployment by functional experts from the fleet, using contractor-supplied data and their own expertise, (2) updated by Marine Corps Headquarters through its review of personnel change requests received from field units, and (3) validated through the performance of on-site manpower survey. The GAO reported that such surveys involve application of staffing standards (when they exist) and reviews of the way work is actually done and the number of people required to do it when no standards exist. The GAO concluded, however, that it was unable to evaluate the adequacy of on-site reviews of aviation units because (1) none were performed during its review and (2) no documentation existed to show how these reviews had been done in the past. (pp. 3, pp. 17-18, p. 30, pp. 34-35/GAO Draft Report)

low on pp. 14 to 15.

**COMMENT:** Concur. The Marine Corps (in conjunction with the Navy Management Systems Support Office, Mechanicsburg, PA.) will establish a system which will provide a continuous 12-month display, (up-to-date to within 30 days) of aircraft maintenance data by type/model/series. The data will be categorized by direct maintenance manhour, maintenance action form (MAF) and support action form (SAF) times. Also included will be sorties/hours flown. A 3-year audit cycle of Marine Aviation will be formalized which will encompass at least two like units, one from each Fleet Marine Force. As previously stated in our comment to Finding B, this audit cycle will include acceptable and supportable management processes. An internal Standing Operating Procedures (SOP) will be developed which will establish the aviation manpower requirement parameters for combat operations, i.e. two 12-hour work shifts tied to the combat utilization rates. All audit/change documentation will be maintained for a period of 4 years, thereby providing an appropriate audit overlap.

**FINDING E: GAO's Observations Of Non-FMF Unit Surveys.** The GAO noted that the Corps has an on-site manpower survey program, conducted by analysts from Corps Headquarters, which serves as the primary process for validating manpower requirements for

non-FMF units. To evaluate the conduct of on-site surveys, the GAO observed the survey of approximately 4,300 positions at Camp Pendleton conducted by a team of five civilians and three officers. The GAO found that, although 62 percent of the 4,300 positions were covered by staffing standards, the analysts used their own judgment for 84 percent of the cases rather than applying the standards. (The GAO noted that, although the analysts based their decisions primarily on other factors, they claimed the standards were considered.) Also, the GAO found no indication that the use of judgment in lieu of the applicable standards was due to concerns about the rigor or supportability of the standards. During the conduct of the survey, the GAO observed the following:

- the analysts based their judgments mainly on unrecorded discussions with managers, work center supervisors and workers, past and future workload, and perceived need;

- the analysts did little to supplement the information by the use of other operational audit techniques;

- although the analysts concluding the survey said that they had observed work being performed, the GAO witnessed that such observations consisted only of a quick tour of the work center;

- although the analysts also said that they had reviewed and analyzed available records for a number of units, the GAO stated it was unable to verify their statements because documentation in support of their analysis could not be provided; and

- when the GAO accompanied the analysts, in most instances it was observed that only cursory reviews were made, if at all.

The GAO concluded that in the absence or limited use of other sources of data, such first-hand observations or analyses of records to verify and validate information derived from interviews is an inadequate use of operational audit methodology. (p. 3, pp. 19-20, p. 30/GAO Draft Report)

Now on pp. 3, 15 to 16, and 21.

COMMENT: Concur. The Marine Corps Onsite Manpower Survey Program, as it previously functioned, was terminated during the second quarter of FY86. The Marine Corps is currently in the process of initiating the development of a Manpower Requirements Determination Program that will identify the most efficient organization (MEO), include efficiency reviews, determine work measurement standards, and determine the manpower requirements necessary to accomplish the assigned mission. Formal training of manpower analysts, using DOD established courses of instruction, was started in mid-1986. The first phase of the development plan has been approved and is currently being field tested.

FINDING F: Surveys Are Not Performed In Some Areas While Some Surveys Are Redirected. The GAO found that the Corps does not use on-site surveys for such areas as the headquarters and service companies within each of the ground combat and combat service support battalions or for supply maintenance or motor transport areas, which provide support services similar to those provided by non-FMF units (for which it does make on-site surveys). The GAO concluded that, while it does not know whether the absence of a more rigorous approach to determining manpower requirements in FMF support areas has produced erroneous results, it does raise questions about the credibility of the requirements in those units. The GAO also noted that the Corps has recently decided to redirect on-site surveys and to use the personnel involved in the surveys to determine new staffing standards and overhaul the Manual. The GAO concluded that, while it agrees with the current emphasis on standards development, a periodic on-site validation survey program for both FMF and non-FMF units should eventually be implemented. (p. 3, pp. 20-21, p. 30/GAO Draft Report)

COMMENT: Partially concur. DOD concurs that stricter adherence to established procedures, with emphasis on documentation, will facilitate the validation of FMF manpower requirements. However, DOD does not agree with the need for on-site surveys for these areas. Precise staffing standards, in their pure form, for such functional areas as administration, supply, and maintenance could be appropriate for FMF units only in an ingarrison, non combat situation and could be universal until the specific FMF unit deploys or is employed in a combat environment. At this point, the parameters of an amphibious operation geographic area, type and strength of opposing forces, size of the force beachhead, disposition of forces, and nature of the threat influence the degree of administrative and logistical support. Combined with the potentially rapid transition from peace to war, the Marine Corps must use dissimilar approaches to developing staffing standards for FMF units in a deployed/combat environment. Continuing combat exercises and mission/functional area analyses provide the framework for doctrinal changes, hardware improvements, education and training requirements, and necessary adjustments to manpower requirements for the operating forces to meet our needs against an armed aggressor. The Marine Corps methodology for determining and validating force requirements for FMF units in a combat environment is an inherent part of our systems acquisition process. Marine Corps Order P5000.10B, Systems Acquisition Manual, requires regular reviews of all mission and functional areas to ensure operational readiness. In view of the above and milestones for implementing our new procedures, priority will be placed on the non-FMF. Those areas susceptible for use on FMF units will be examined for application to appropriate FMF units.

FINDING G: Problems Found With Structure Studies In Establishing Requirements. The GAO noted that the Corps relies on structure studies when establishing requirements for ground combat and combat service support units. The GAO reported several problems as a result of its review of the structure studies. The GAO found

that fiscal and personnel management constraints appear to influence prematurely the results of structure studies. Rather than determining how many positions are needed to perform assigned missions, the GAO noted that Corps structure studies generally start with an assumption about the size of the unit that will be funded, and then the unit structure is built to fit. The GAO noted, for example, that in 1979, due to fiscal constraints, the Commandant directed that a study be conducted to develop an optimum battalion having about 900 Marines, instead of its previous total of 1,192. Although the study found a need for 990 Marines, it proposed a 916 man structure in accordance with the Commandant's direction. The GAO concluded that there is the need for the Corps to identify a force structure designed to meet its assigned mission, independent of fiscal and personnel management constraints, so that DoD and congressional decision makers can make more informed decisions about the Corps' strength levels. The GAO also found that structure studies were not made comprehensively, which limited their usefulness for manpower requirements determination. The GAO noted that, according to Corps officials, since 1980, structure studies have been done for only four of the eight different types of ground combat battalions. The GAO observed that one reason for comprehensively validating manpower requirements is that the individual units within a division depend upon each other to accomplish their missions. The GAO concluded that the manpower needs of one unit cannot be reasonably validated apart from the needs of the other units. The GAO also concluded that comprehensive validation makes requirements less vulnerable to arbitrary adjustments such as those made over the last seven years with regard to battalion size infantry. In addition, the GAO found that utilization of the results of the structure studies could not be confirmed. The GAO noted, for example, that Corps officials were unable to reconcile why the requirements for the ground combat infantry battalion were set at 824 when the structure study found a need for a battalion size of 990 or explain how the recently completed Center for Naval Analysis study would be used in the development or validation of a table or organization for combat service support units. The GAO concluded that structure study results actually being utilized could not be confirmed. (p. 4, pp. 21-25, p. 30/GAO Draft Report)

Now on pp. 16 to 18, and 21.

COMMENT: Partially concur. The DOD agrees that FMF manpower requirements should not be constrained by the fiscal environment. The DOD also agrees that interdependent units require concurrent, comprehensive validation. The DOD does not agree, however, that structure studies can be begun without making some initial assumptions or that structure studies alone can be used to define requirements. While the GAO found that various studies were begun with assumptions of manpower amounts, the underlying ideas in these assumptions were variations in maneuver units and combat support and what combinations of both were best to accomplish the mission against the changing threat. Structure studies, while

valuable, cannot be used alone to build manpower requirements for FMF units. The insight and experience of Marine commanders gained from combat and exercises with these units must also be considered.

FINDING H: The Determination Process Is Hampered By A Lack Of Documentation. The GAO observed that adequate documentation is necessary for credibility so that established requirements can be reviewed and estimates of future requirements defended. The GAO further observed that without adequate documentation, outdated requirements are likely to be perpetuated. The GAO found, however, that (1) the Corps' staffing criteria, on-site surveys, and structure studies all lacked adequate documentation (i. e., the Corps has little documentation supporting the development and maintenance of the staffing standards), (2) the Corps does not document the manpower determination processes used during on-site surveys, other than what may be documented in the Navy training plans supporting preliminary tables of organization, (3) for non-FMF units, analysts usually did not adequately support their reasons for changing requirements by describing the methodology they used to gather and analyze data, but simply stated their conclusions and did not specify the basis for them, and (4) while the structure studies themselves are documented, the Corps does not document how the results of the studies are used to establish manpower requirements. The GAO concluded that the Corps' requirements determination process is hampered by a lack of documentation. (p. 4, pp. 25-27, p. 30/GAO Draft Report)

COMMENT: Concur. As stated in previous comments to this report, the Marine Corps' new Manpower Requirements Determination Program will provide full documentation.

FINDING I: Oversight of Manpower Requirements Determination Process Is Lacking. The GAO found that the Corps' manpower requirements determination processes lack oversight. The GAO observed that the proper management of a comprehensive manpower requirements planning and determination function requires the designation of responsibilities for issuing formal guidance that establishes common objectives, coordination of all manpower requirements determination processes, monitoring all requirements to ensure compliance with policies and procedures, providing performance feedback to manpower management authorities, and emphasizing that management is committed to determining manpower requirements in the most efficient, effective, and reliable manner. The GAO found, however, that the Corps has no guidance on (1) how staffing criteria should be developed, updated or validated, (2) when and how on-site surveys/structure studies should be undertaken, (3) how methods studies should be undertaken and used, (4) when and how the judgment of personnel should be used, or (5) how determination processes should be documented. In addition, the GAO found that further compounding the problem was the lack of

guidance on the number of hours Marines have available and are required to work in order to help determine how many personnel the Corps needs for those functions where staffing standards are used. In addition, the GAO found little evidence that the various Corps units coordinate the procedures they use for determining manpower requirements, nor is there evidence that the Corps units responsible for the Personnel Requirements Criteria Manual, coordinated the procedures with the 20 functional sponsors involved in the development and validation of the staffing criteria contained in the manual. The GAO observed that although the Corps established an efficiency review program in 1983, it has not integrated this program into its manpower requirements determination process. The GAO reported that although the Corps' on-site survey program provides some independent evaluation of the processes non-FMF units use to derive their manpower requirements, it does not monitor or verify the processes FMF units use even though these units account for 63 percent of the Corps' stated manpower needs. The GAO concluded that the Corps (1) provides little oversight of its manpower determination processes, (2) the manpower determination process lacks guidance, and (3) the Corps needs to coordinate its manpower requirements determinations processes to ensure that requirements are being established consistently. (p. 4, pp. 27-30/GAO Draft Report)

Now on pp. 3 and 19 to 20.

COMMENT: Concur. The new manpower requirements determination procedures will require direct involvement and coordination with applicable functional sponsors and will include establishment of the most efficient organization (MEO) and efficiency review (ER) procedures. The Marine Corps' initial efforts are directed to the non-FMF, and the Marine Corps intends to study application to selected FMF organizations as new procedures are finalized.

RECOMMENDATIONS

RECOMMENDATION 1: The GAO recommended that the Secretary of the Navy direct the Commandant of the Marine Corps to issue guidance governing the development and application of manpower determination processes, including (a) when engineered manpower standards rather than less precise criteria, such as staffing guides, should be used, (b) when and how staffing criteria should be developed, validated or updated, and documented, (c) how structure studies should be made and used in determining manpower needs, (d) when and how the judgment of personnel should be used and documented, and (e) how many hours Marines are expected to work during the day or week. (p. 31/GAO Draft Report)

COMMENT: Concur. Direction, however, is not required. It has already been determined that the new Marine Corps Manpower Requirements Program will include a formal handbook, which will provide specific guidance and instructions concerning the five areas addressed above for the non-FMF peacetime environment. When completed and approved, the manpower requirements determination handbook will be published and issued to all Marine Corps commands. Contractor assistance in this endeavor is presently being negotiated with a start date of approximately 1 June 1987 as a target. It should take approximately 2 years after the start date to complete development of the handbook, development of training, and testing of the methodology/handbook/training. Implementation of the new program should commence approximately 1 July 1989.

RECOMMENDATION 2: The GAO recommended that the Secretary of the Navy direct the Commandant of the Marine Corps to require systematic management oversight, which will provide adequate coordination and monitoring of the procedures that various organizations use to determine their manpower needs. (p. 31/GAO Draft Report)

COMMENT: Concur. Direction, however, is not required. Steps have already been initiated to accomplish this recommendation. Upon implementation of the new manpower requirements determination procedures, all commands will be using the same procedures for determining manpower needs. Manpower Department representatives from Headquarters, Marine Corps will conduct periodic visits to all commands to ensure coordination and management oversight. The implementation date of the procedures is approximately 1 July 1989.

RECOMMENDATION 3: The GAO recommended that the Secretary of the Navy direct the Commandant of the Marine Corps to improve the staffing standards program by requiring (a) accepted work measurement techniques be used in standards development and validation, (b) efficiency review results be used in the development of

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Now on p. 22.

staffing standards, and (c) coverage of staffing standards be expanded to include all FMF and non-FMF functions where work load measurement is feasible and practical. (p. 31/GAO Draft Report)

COMMENT: Concur. Direction, however, is not required. Work has already been started in this area. The Marine Corps intends to direct our initial efforts to the non-FMF and to study application to selected FMF functions in a garrison environment as sound standards are developed. Development of credible staffing standards for the approximately 45 non-FMF functional areas is scheduled for completion by 1 July 1991.

Now on p. 22.

RECOMMENDATION 4: The GAO recommended that the Secretary of the Navy direct the Commandant of the Marine Corps to improve the on-site survey program by requiring (a) applicable standards be used and that deviations from the standards be explained, (b) a combination of techniques be used where the operational audit approach is applied, and (c) on-site surveys also be used to help establish requirements for appropriate elements of FMF units. (p. 31-32/GAO Draft Report)

COMMENT: Concur. Direction, however, is not required. The Marine Corps On-site Manpower Survey Program, as it previously functioned, was terminated during the second quarter of FY86. New manpower requirements procedures which will satisfy the above are being developed and will be used at selected appropriate FMF organizations in garrison. Implementation of the new program is scheduled for 1 July 1989.

Now on p. 22.

RECOMMENDATION 5: The GAO recommended that the Secretary of the Navy direct the Commandant of the Marine Corps to ensure that adequate documentation is maintained on the development and application of staffing standards, the conduct of on-site surveys, and the use of manpower requirements information from structure studies. (p. 32/GAO Draft Report)

COMMENT: Concur. Direction, however, is not required. The new Marine Corps Manpower Requirements Determination Program will provide full documentation and audit trail on the development and use of standards in conjunction with the conduct of studies. As previously stated, implementation of the new program is scheduled for 1 July 1989.

Now on p. 22.

RECOMMENDATION 6: The GAO recommended that the Secretary of the Navy direct the Commandant of the Marine Corps to identify manpower requirements independent of fiscal and personnel management constraints. (p. 32/GAO Draft Report)

COMMENT: Concur. Direction, however, is not required. The identification of total manpower requirements will be accomplished incrementally as the new Manpower Requirements Determination Program progresses.

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